

MORMON PIONEER NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA (MPNHA)

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Discovery Road celebrates National Park Service Centennial



Bryce Canyon National Park



Canyonlands National Park



Capitol Reef National Park



Zion National Park

On hundred years. That's a birthday to remember for the National Park Service and one Discovery Road hosts Maryda Nicole Gallo and James Nelson celebrate in "Precious Jewels in any Language" as they tag along with groups of international visitors who visit the five national parks in Utah: Canyonlands, Capitol Reef, Arches, Bryce and Zion.

In 1872, Congress established Yellowstone as the first national park and on August 25, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the act creating the National Park Service, an agency that now protects more than 380 parks, covering more than 83 million acres.

The national parks have been called "America's best idea," and in this Discovery Road episode, international visitors learn why.

The visitors hail from such faraway places as France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Vietnam, South Korea, Australia, and also from our next-door neighbor, Canada.

Without fail, every visitor is struck by the sheer size of the national parks. "Enormous," "magnificent" and "majesty" are words that trip off their tongues as describe what they are seeing. It's clear that each is affected by the beauty that surrounds them.

"It feeds my soul," Sonja Groening from Austria says.

"It opens our minds and opens our eyes. It helps us understand other people and their thoughts," one South Korean visitor says.

The visitors enjoy the sights and sounds of the American West from the sweeping vistas to the open road and the characters they encounter along the way.

Near Zion National Park, the visitors meet Richard Budd of Kanab and get to explore his antique, restored Ford pick-up truck. Many of the visitors have only seen the likes of it in old Hollywood movies.

In the episode, the hosts also visit with former volunteer ranger Black George Simmons, 82, who says he loved “giving people a sense of place one yeehaw at a time.”

Serving as a backdrop to all the visiting and the storytelling in this episode of Discovery Road is the incredible open space of the parks protected by our forebearers for generations of Americans and their guests to enjoy.



Along with seeing the national parks, visitors portrayed in the Discovery Road segment get to see many sights along their journey, including Richard Budd's restored Ford pick up.



Visitors come from all over the world to experience Utah's national parks.

“There is nothing so American as our national parks.... The fundamental idea behind the parks... is that the country belongs to the people, that it is in process of making for the enrichment of the lives of all of us.”

- President Franklin D. Roosevelt

“Precious Jewels in any Language” will air on the Utah Education Network on Saturday, May 21 and Wednesday May 25. It is running on an ongoing basis on CentraCom , Fairview, Channel 10; Manti Telephone, Channel 3 and KTTA 8.1 Monroe, which serve central and south central Utah. It can also be found at the MPNHA website at <http://www.mormonpioneerheritage.org/discovery-road-videos/>

Interested viewers may find out how to access UEN-TV at <http://www.uen.org/tv/translators/>

Find Your Park

As part of the centennial celebration, the National Park Service has kicked off a movement called Find Your Park to inspire people to connect with, enjoy, and support America’s national parks.

At FindYourPark.com visitors can virtually explore Utah’s (and other states’) national parks and find out about special events such as Loa Elementary School students in Wayne County celebrating the national park centennial in Capitol Reef National Park today, May 19, at the historic Fruita School house (built in 1896) with a graduation/birthday ceremony.

FindYourPark.com is just one of the many ways the National Parks Service is celebrating its centennial. Visit www.nps.gov to find out more.

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The Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area includes 400 miles of glorious scenic byways, a vast array of wildlife, the best of western living, cattle and sheep ranches, and colorful mountain vistas, all within a trip on Utah Heritage Highway 89.